



World Wildlife Day 2015

World Wildlife Day will be celebrated on 3 March under the theme **“Wildlife crime is serious, let’s get serious about wildlife crime.”** The Day was first celebrated last year following its designation by the United Nations on 20 December, 2013 to celebrate and raise awareness of the world’s wild fauna and flora. Actually March 3, is the date on which the Convention on International Trade in Endangered Species of Wild Fauna and Flora (CITES) was adopted in 1973 – some forty odd years ago. CITES plays an important role in ensuring that international trade does not threaten the species’ survival.



World Wildlife Day is an opportunity to celebrate the many beautiful and varied forms of wild fauna and flora. It also provides the chance to raise awareness of the multitude of benefits that conservation provides to people. At the same time, the Day reminds us of the urgent need to step up the fight against wildlife crime, which has wide-ranging economic, environmental and social impacts.

This year, the Environmental Protection Agency is collaborating with the Guyana Wildlife Authority to plan activities leading up to the March 3 observance. A series of awareness sessions on Wildlife and Wildlife crime have been conducted in twenty-four (24) secondary schools to highlight the importance of wildlife. These schools have also been targeted for a



poster competition. Also, an exhibition to highlight the work and major achievements of the Wildlife Authority in Guyana is scheduled for schools and the interested public at the Guyana Zoological Park. At this exhibition participants will be able to take part in trivia games and quizzes and get the opportunity to win attractive tokens and memorabilia.

This year’s theme **“Wildlife crime is serious, let’s get**

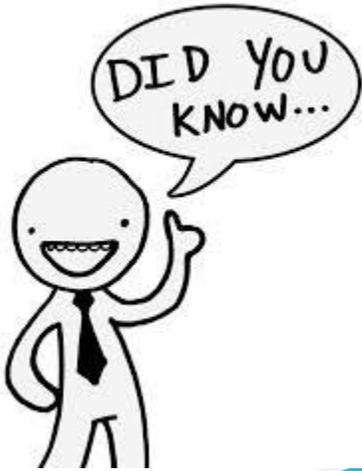
serious about wildlife crime” comes at a fitting time when many of the world’s Wildlife species are under threat from poaching, illegal exportation, and hunting for recreation or food. Rapid urbanization and Climate Change are also adding to the species under threat. Healthy wild animal populations often are an indication of a healthy overall natural environment. The threats to wildlife not only pose serious implications for wild species alone but also the plant and animal kingdom generally. Because they are sensitive to seemingly minor disturbances, wild species may present the first indications of disease, toxins, or changes in climate. This is important since it is often the first sign or early warning that something is wrong, and measures can be put in place to alleviate or mitigate the effects.

The importance of Wildlife cannot be underestimated. As such, conservation and management should be practiced tandem in order to strike a balance between ecological and socio-economic benefits. This is necessary since Wildlife has an intrinsic value and contributes to the ecological, genetic, social, economic, scientific, educational, cultural, recreational and aesthetic aspects of sustainable development and human well-being.



While the threats to wildlife are great, we can reduce them through our collective efforts. On this inaugural World Wildlife Day, I urge all sectors of society to end illegal wildlife trafficking and commit to trading and using wild plants and animals sustainably and equitably"

Secretary-General Ban Ki-moon



The Savannas of
Guyana are home to
over 800 species of
birds and more than
1000 different
species of trees.

